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69 influence is stronger, but there too one finds associations influenced by foreign types of ecclesiastical organization.

614 Since 1946 the Boulou clans have formed associations, sometimes
575 proclaimed in conformity with the law of 1901, and since 1950 gathered into the N'Tem-Kribi Tribal Union, which covers primarily Boulou, Fong, Fang, Ntoumou, and Mvaé. Each clan has a central board elected during an annual or biennial ésulan, and local boards. Membership is not automatic: members have to apply for admission, pay subscription and entrance fees. At the core of each clan association there are "societies" of young people of both sexes, of married women, of nonvoters /abstinents/, etc. The young people's "societies" are certainly the most unusual. They were formed with official approbation at the time of the abolition of forced labor recruitment. The "societies" used to bargain with local authorities over projects like road maintenance or the construction of works of art /sic/, the money received being turned into a common account and used, either to help the members meet bride-price payments or other expenses, or—particularly—to arrange festivals and banquets.

575 In large towns Pahouin migrants join de jure and de facto associ-
454 ations, generally within a tribal, not a clan, framework. These associations have protective and mutual-aid purposes /69/ and are sometimes quite powerful. To these should be related the tontines or subscription societies consisting of small numbers of laborers, servants, or minor employees, who pay into a common fund the larger part of their monthly wage, each member in turn being able to draw upon the sizable sum thus collected each month. The last two institutions are in no way specifically Pahouin, nor characteristic of the Cameroons or Gabon.

6. Law and Property

a. Source

671 Pahouin law has always been complex. Formerly, it dealt primarily with the status and condition of persons /statut et de l'état des personnes/ upon which the property system was dependent. Under the influence of the economic changes brought about by colonization, the law with regard to property has become definitely independent of the law of persons, the latter being inclined to grow simpler with the dissociation of the old social and family organizations.

children before marrying her off. In the economic sphere a young unmarried woman may freely undertake all sorts of commercial enterprises, whereas a married woman would need her husband's consent. Nor do divorce or widowhood, /82/ any more than marriage, emancipate a woman in theory. Escaping from her husband's guardianship, she falls back under the authority of the head of her family, but from the point of view of custom this is not a detrimental situation, since every person remains subject to his father.

Therefore the liberty women possess in managing their inheritance ought not to appear an anomaly. Besides, individual savings are widespread in Africa. And the division of property into masculine and feminine allows women and girls to own objects which neither husbands nor fathers may take from them. A partition of goods is the logical consequence of these assumptions.

Women theoretically have the right to dispose of the product of their labor—their harvest—but they must provide the basic foodstuffs. Only the surplus is sold, but in the majority of families when large sales take place the proceeds are divided between husband and wife. Women usually control the proceeds of day-to-day sales in a market or to passing travelers: petty amounts comprising only 10 percent of the total family budget. They may invest these profits by joining a tontine (a society in which each person makes a contribution on a fixed date and of which the capital is allotted to each member in turn).

Thus the traditional means for growing rich are limited. But changing customs are allowing women to follow various occupations that will make them independent. Women engaged in trade or dressmaking, for which they pay a license, business trade employees or saleswomen, theoretically have to be authorized by their husbands, who may decide how the earnings are to be spent. In actual fact women seem to be free agents. Even in the customary courts they appear alone, unaccompanied by fathers or husbands.

In the sphere of land tenure the trend is the same: women are acquiring a certain amount of property. With stabilization /i.e. settling down/, the growth of collective rights over cleared land or land good for tillage is quite understandable. The idea of allowing a personal right to a woman who is not truly a member of a family, but merely loaned to it, seems an aberration. This, nevertheless, is the situation among the Ewŏndo, where a divorced woman